REMARKS

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-32, 34 and 36-48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokota et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,282,330) in view of Sheridan (U.S. Patent No. 5,760,917).

As a preliminary matter, on page 3, lines 1-2 of the Office Action, the Examiner refers to reference numeral 20 of Fig. 3 of Yakota. Applicant is unable to locate reference numeral 20 in Fig. 3, and requests clarification from the Examiner.

With regard to the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections, Applicant traverses the rejections of claims 1-3, 5, 7-32, 34 and 36-48.

The combination of Yakota and Sheridan does not disclose or suggest all the elements of independent claim 1. Claim 1 recites a method of storing and managing processed contents data in a storage area of a data managing unit. In embodiments of Applicant's inventions, an image processing service performs image processing on image data received by the image processing service, and a resulting processed image is stored and is available to the user. Claim 7 recites a non-exhaustive list of high definition image processing operations, for example, red-eye correction processing and defect erasing processing, that may be performed by the image processing service on the image data. As recited in claim 1, image data processed in this manner may then be stored and managed by the image processing service for later retrieval by the user or a third party. In short, claim 1 requires that data representing a processed image be stored for access by a user. Yakota does not disclose or suggest this feature.

Yakota discloses image data stored in an image pool for storing image data to be processed (Fig. 2A, col. 4, ll. 22-24 and col. 6, ll. 21-27). Image data is read from the image pool, image processing operations are performed on the data, and the processed image is output to a printer or display device. (col. 3, ll. 11-58). In Yakota, the preprocessed image data is stored, and the image data is reprocessed each time an output is desired, whereas embodiments of Applicant's inventions provide a stored processed image that is available to the user without reprocessing. Therefore, Yakota does not disclose or suggest all elements of claim 1.

In addition, Yakota does not disclose or suggest a terminal of an orderer capable of bidirectional data transfer, as in claim 1. Yakota discloses data input machines, for example scanner 1 and image input apparatus 5000, that merely transfer input image data to the server 1000 (Fig. 1 and column 2, lines 50-53). Yakota's printer 3000 merely receives processed image data from the server 1000 (Fig. 1 and column 3, lines 50-58). In other words, the devices disclosed by Yakota provide only unidirectional data transfer rather than the bidirectional data transfer of Applicant's terminal recited in claim 1.

Further, the Examiner has not established motivation to combine Sheridan with Yakota. The Examiner asserts that Sheridan teaches that digital image data may be acquired from apparatuses such as digital cameras or image scanners, and that it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that Yakota's service can be easily extended to digital camera users, in particular when faster transmission lines are available to them.

Yakota discloses an image input apparatus and a scanner (Fig. 1 and col. 2, ll. 50-53). According to Yakota, an image input apparatus reads images from a storage medium which stores digital images (col. 2, ll. 67 – col. 3, ll. 1-3). Digital storage mediums contained in a

digital camera are such storage mediums that store digital images, and so may be read by Yakota's image input apparatus. Therefore, the disclosure of Sheridan is merely cumulative to Yakota. Additionally, neither reference suggests that higher speed communication is required or desirable for uploading digital images from digital cameras.

Further, even if Sheridan was not cumulative to Yakota, the disclosed unidirectional image data transfer between Yakota's input/output machines (for example, scanner 1, image input apparatus 5000 and printer 3000) and the server 1000 could not be combined with Sheridan's transmission of image data between a user's terminal and a hub station via the Internet (*See* Sheridan, Fig. 1) since Yakota's input/output machines are connected directly with the server 1000 (*See* Yakota, Fig. 1). Therefore, the Examiner's reasoning for combining the references is deficient.

Since the combination of Yakota and Sheridan does not disclose every limitation of claim 1, and the Examiner has not shown the requisite motivation to combine the references, independent claim 1 is patentable over Yakota and Sheridan. Claims 2-3, 5, 7-8, 11, 13 and 21-22 are patentable over these references at least by virtue of their dependency.

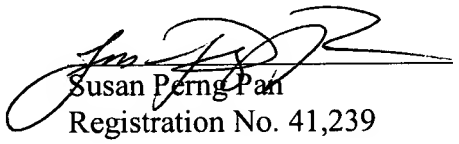
As claims 12, 14-20, 23-32, 34 and 36-48 have been rejected for the same reasons as set forth in the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 7-8, 11, 13 and 21-22, these claims are patentable over Yakota and Sheridan for the same reasons that claims 1-3, 5, 7-8, 11, 13 and 21-22 are patentable.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Perng Pai
Registration No. 41,239

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: February 3, 2006